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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
08/787,745	01/24/1997	JOHN B. HOEFLICH	29124-009	6904

7590

08/21/2003

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EXAMINER

BLAU, STEPHEN LUTHER

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3711

DATE MAILED: 08/21/2003

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

08/787,745

Applicant(s)

HOEFLICH ET AL.

Examiner

Stephen L. Blau

Art Unit

3711

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 July 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3,5-9 and 11-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3,5-9,11,12 and 19-21 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 13-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.  
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120**

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).  
\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).  
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_ 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Claim Objections***

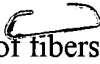
1. The change to claim 7 is agreed with and the objection is removed.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 13-16 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Akatsuka (5,437,450) in view of Meredith.

Akatsuka discloses an elongated tubular shaft (Col. 5, Lns. 62-68) comprising a plurality of layers of  fibers embedded in a synthetic resin (Figure, Col. 4 Lns. 24-35, Col. 5 Lns. 1-7), a butt section having a diameter between .400 and .540 inches in the form of a grip end inside diameter of 11.5-14.5 mm with a wall thickness of .5-2 mm (Col. 5, Lns. 62-68), a butt section transitioning without intervening discontinuities to a tapered intermediate section, a tapered intermediate section tapering without intervening discontinuities to a relatively smaller diameter tip section in a form of an outer diameter gradually increasing from one end adjacent to a tip end

of a shaft to an other end adjacent to a grip end of a shaft (Col. 3 Lns. 56-60), a tip section including a portion having an outside diameter adapted to be fitted to the hosel of a club head in the form of an outer diameter size of a tip end (Col. 5, Lns. 62-68), and a shaft length of 45 inches (Col. 7, Ln. 34).

Akatsuka lacks a butt section comprising a substantially cylindrical cross section, a butt section and tip section including parallel sidewalls and a kick point above a center of a shaft.

Meredith discloses a butt section and tip section being substantially cylindrical in cross section (Fig. 1, Col. 2, Lns. 34-47). In view of the patent of Meredith it would have been obvious to modify the shaft of Akatsuka to have a butt section comprising a cylindrical cross section with parallel sidewalls in order to have a similar feel along the butt section when gripped by a player at different points. In addition, in view of the patent of Meredith it would have been obvious to modify the shaft of Akatsuka to have a tip section having parallel side walls in order to facilitate the adaptation of inserting a tip section of a shaft into a neck of a head which is a cylindrical shape.

Meredith discloses a shaft having a kick point above a center point of a shaft (Fig. 8, Col. 1, Lns. 16-23) in order to lower the angle of trajectory who tends to hit the ball too high (Col. 1, Lns. 24-37) and designing a kick point without using a discontinuity but using gradual changes in shaft diameter and shaft wall thickness (Figs. 1, 7). In view of the patent of Meredith it would have been obvious to modify the shaft of Akatsuka to have a kick point above the center point of a shaft in order to provide a shaft for a club which produces a lower angle of trajectory for a player who tends to hit a ball too high and in order to increase the velocity of a head at impact by using more of the shaft to snap back at impact thus increasing hitting distance.

4. Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable Akatsuka (5,437,450) in view of Meredith as applied to claims 13-16 and 18 above, and further in view of Kobayashi and Turner.

Akatsuka discloses a butt diameter of .492 inches (12.5mm) (Col. 5, Lns. 66-68).

Akatsuka lacks a butt diameter between .450 to .475 inches. Kobayashi discloses a player weak in strength requiring a more flexible shaft (Col. 1, Lns. 13-36). Turner discloses making a more flexible shaft by decreasing the outer diameter of a shaft (Col. 8, Ln. 63 through Col. 9, Ln. 4). In view of the patent of Kobayashi and Turner it would have been obvious to modify the shaft of Akatsuka to have a shaft with a butt diameter of .474 inches in order to provide a more flexible shaft to a weaker player who swings a shaft at a slower speed.

#### ***Allowable Subject Matter***

5. Claims 1-3, 5-9, 11-12 and 19-21 are allowed.


#### ***Response to Arguments***

6. The argument that Vincent and Iwanaga disclose discontinuities is agreed with and as such these references have been removed and a new ground of rejection has been made.

***Conclusion***

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Steve Blau whose telephone number is (703) 308-2712. The examiner is available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.. If the examiner is unavailable you can contact his supervisor Paul Sewell whose telephone number is (703) 308-2126. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0858. (TC 3700 Official Fax 703-872-9302, TC 3700 After Final Fax 703-872-9393)

Slb/ 18 June 2003

  
STEPHEN BLAU  
PRIMARY EXAMINER